

"Ye Must Be Born Again."

John 3, 1-10. "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night. Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Again, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. Nicodemus answered and said, "How can these things be? Jesus answered and said, unto him, Art thou a Master in Israel and knowest not these things?"

Man's soul is dual in nature because dual in parentage. It is at once the "off-spring of God" (in a restricted sense) and the "Son of Adam" (in the fullest sense.)

PROVE THAT MAN'S SPIRIT IS THE CHILD OF GOD.

Paul on Mars' hill said, "Certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his off-spring. For as much then as we are the off-spring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold." See Act 17, 28 and 29. Luke in tracing Jesus' genealogy writes "which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."

It is evident that it is what Paul calls the off-spring of God, within us to which reference is made in Prov. 20, 27. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the innermost being.

This "candle" sheds light for man's own eyes on all that occurs in the realm of his thoughts, motives and purposes. It is in God's light, showing man his own heart as it is in God's sight. It is a light which illumines his way to the foot of the cross where he may receive through the blood of Christ the sonship of God by grace, which secures life everlasting.

This Universal Fatherhood of God is a Biblical doctrine, but a very subordinate one, being found in probably not more than fifteen or twenty passages in all scripture, and strongly stated in only a few of these.

But, subordinate though it be, man's sonship from God by nature is no mean gift, and the scripture that bears upon it is not lightly to be esteemed.

But on this truth one of the most far-reaching, and to the souls of men, most fatal errors of modern times has been founded, viz: the Universal Fatherhood of God as generally taught. The fundamental principal of the error being the theory that in order to inherit eternal life, man has but to cultivate the divinity within, live worthy of it, and in accordance with its dictates; i. e. that everlasting life is secured by imitation of Christ, membership in the church and observance of its ordinances, very especially that of baptism, together with pure morality, particularly in honesty, truthfulness and sincerity with "no bad habits," and with "good works," such as giving to the poor and unfortunate, contributing to church expenses and visiting the sick. In other words, this doctrine of the Universal Fatherhood of God as generally taught, is at heart morality as a ground of eternal salvation, rather than the spirituality that necessarily results from the indwelling of the Divine Spirit in the human body as his temple. He living man's life for him. It may be truly called "The Moral Man's Error" or "The Moral Man's Plan of Salvation," as opposed to God's Plan.

If man's soul were altogether, God's off-spring, and that off-

spring had the "power of an endless life," then the Moral man's plan of salvation would be a less fatal error. But alas! men, all men are by nature the "Sons of Adam." Scripture abounds in statements of this truth. It is by no means a subordinate doctrine of the Bible. It is one of its two most prominent teachings, the other being the salvation through the blood of Christ.

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE

On this subject? It is the same Paul that tells us that we are the "off-spring of God," that speaks of the natural, sinful human element in the soul which we inherit from Adam, as the "flesh," this element being so truly inseparable from the living body that the two are called by one and the same name, "flesh."

That there are two elements of the soul, "the off-spring of God" and "the son of Adam" is clearly taught by him in Heb. 12, 9. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we give them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

The nature of that "flesh" of our souls, our heritage from human parents can be judged by its works. Gal. 5, 19-21 f. c. Now the works of the flesh are manifest which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, enjoinings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like."

The curtain is drawn aside also in Rom. 1, 2-9-31.—"unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affections, implacable, unmerciful."

The slanderers, the thefts, the deceptions, betrayals, the oppressions, the persecutions, the murders, the endless lists of man's brutalities to man would seem enough, if we had no revelation from God to attest the fact that the Adamic heart of man is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

Surely man needs to be "regenerated," born again, "created anew" before he is prepared for that abode of which "it is written," "And there shall in no wise enter unto it anything that defileth."

THE OFF-SPRING OF GOD IN THE HUMAN HEART IS SUBJECT TO DEATH.

Scripture teaches that it frequently and even generally, if not always and inevitably, dies, while the Adamic off-spring, the natural sinful human spirit, is in vigorous life; that is, the sonship from God by the natural birth, is so far from having in it "everlasting life" that it is not necessarily covetous in duration even with the short span of human life.

Link together the passages A. and B., below and afterward add the passage C., and we cannot but see how general this death must be in our fellow beings:

(A)—There is no difference, all have sinned.

(B)—For whosoever shall keep the whole law and offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

(C)—The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

That this death takes place within the brief span of human life is evident from the following passages, addressed as they are to persons still living on the earth:

Eph. 2, 1 "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

Jno. 5, 24 "He that believeth in

Him that sent me is passed from death unto life.

1 Jno. 3, 14. "We know we have passed from death unto life."

AGAIN!

"Ye must be born again" if you would have eternal life.

Regeneration by the Spirit—the New Birth is two-fold in its result.

Rev. D. L. Moody said, "God alone restores Adam to his lost state, and in his restoration he is better than he was at the beginning, because his state is eternal. When he is restored to heaven, there is no more banishment."

It is two-fold in its operation.

Rev. Campbell Morgan in one of his services asks (in the rhetorical question) "In the new birth, is man's spirit restored, or is God's Spirit put into the man?" and answers "both."

And these Masters in Israel are scriptural in what they have said.

The New Birth consists of the indwelling of Christ's own Spirit in man, together with the quickening of "the off-spring of God" in man's spirit. [The Adamic soul of man needs no quickening, and Satan sees to his own indwelling in it if man will but consent.]

THE CHRIST-SPIRIT INDWELLING.

"And I will put my Spirit within you."

"And Christ in you the hope of glory."

"I in you," Jesus said.

"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," Paul wrote.

I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him.

THE LAST ADAM [CHRIST] IS A QUICKENING SPIRIT.

Eph. 2, 1 "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

Jno. 5, 24. He that believeth in him that sent me is passed from death unto life.

In Luke 8, 52-55 we read of the ruler of the synagogue's daughter, "And all wept, knowing she was dead, And he took her by the hand and called, saying, maid arise. And her spirit came again."

Jesus did not create a new body but her spirit 'coming again' in obedience to his command "quickened" the same body in which it had lived before. So in the New Birth, Christ's Spirit entering into that in man's soul which is the "off-spring of God," "quickens" it.

To return to the Moral Man's Plan of Salvation.

It is this error that the story of Nicodemus' interview with Jesus refutes utterly. He was a cultured moralist who was so good a theologian as to have attained to the dignity and responsibility of "a ruler of the Jews"—"a Master in Israel." "O you Masters in Israel who are ignoring and obscuring the new birth—and you are many!—steal away to Jesus by night; away from your false theology and your associates in error, away from your pulpit and your writing desk, and listen while he speaks to your heart, saying, "Art thou a Master in Israel and knowest not these things? Ye must be born again"

And you who are not Nicodemus in prominence, but who are truly so in errors, who are not in pulpits but in pews—and your name is Legion!—you who have not been "born again," oh, be born of water and of the Spirit!"

"Am I not born of water?" you ask, "was I not 'born of water,' when in taking church membership I was baptized by sprinkling or pouring or immersion?"

Not necessarily so. Born? born? It is a strong word with a great meaning. Certainly material water

applied to a dead body has no power to regenerate it. Only a creator can do that! Do you think that material water applied to the body can regenerate a soul? A creator must do that!

Matt 27, 24. "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude saying I am innocent of the blood of this just person."

But was he innocent? Did he by the application of water to his hands wash the guilt of the murder of the son of God from his hands? Was that fearful sin of his soul washed off into the basin, or wiped off on the towel? No, no! There was not in all the Mediterranean water enough to wash away that sin.

Water is used in the Bible as symbolic of that which can, and does, wash away sin from the soul, only as symbolic in connection with sin. Baptism by water in whatever quantity and however administered is an outward expression, an open profession of a conscious experience of cleansing within. To be born is to become a new creature, to be "born of water," is to become a new creature by means of that which cleanses; in other words, to become at once a new creature and a cleansed creature.

What then, is the quickening, cleansing agency symbolized here as "water?"

"Comparing things spiritual with spiritual" we see clearly that to be "born of water" is to be born by means of the word of God.

It is said of the new testament "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" [marginal reading "quickened."] The Spirit of Truth by quickening [putting spirit into] God's word to a soul, at once quickens the soul and cleanses it from sin. In being quickened the soul is born, in being cleansed at the same time and by the same agency, it is born of that which cleanses, that which is symbolized by "water." In other words the soul is born of the word, which being quickened and applied to that soul by the Spirit of Truth, cleanses it and "giveth life" to it. In the words of Jesus, the soul is "born of water and of the spirit."

Luke says of the Bereans, "These were more noble... in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scripture daily whether those things were so." "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."

THE WORD AS CLEANSING.

Eph. 5, 25, "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

1 Pet. 1, 22. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit.

THE WORD AS REGENERATING.

1 Pet. 1, 23. "Being born again by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

James 1, 18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth."

Paul writes in 1 Cor. 4, 15. "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."

"Ye must be born again."

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CASTORIA.

Bears the Signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher*

HENRY WATSON**Says "He Should be Sent to Indiana."**

Henry Watson, the Mark Twain of Mt. Sterling, mixes logic in dispensing witicism. When the news of McKinley's assassination reached Mt. Sterling, Watson in conversation with a number of Republicans were speaking about what should be done with the assassin. Some advanced the idea that he should be burned. They asked Watson to give an opinion regarding the assassin and he put on a serio-comic expression and replied: "He should be sent to Indiana."

On another occasion, while in company with a number of Republicans, the present high price of beef was the topic of conversation. Watson claimed that he purchased a 25 cent steak and took it home, and that it was a bigger curiosity to his children than Barnum's show. Of course the Republicans present could not explain the high price of beef without touching upon the "beef trust," and other nefarious schemes of the present administration. Watson told them that the Democratic party for years past had presented arguments based on reason, the Constitution and the bible; why the Democratic party was the party for the people, and finding that Republicans were not susceptible of reasoning, the only avenue of convincing them: that they were wrong was through their stomachs.—Valley View Argent.

The Free Rural Delivery.

The estimates of the cost of free rural delivery of letters and newspapers for the coming fiscal year have been submitted. The total asked is \$12,655,890, an increase of \$5,126,400 over the expenses of the current year—and the money is on hand to meet the increase. The increased expense not only shows the wisdom of the new delivery system but of the weeding out of the mail bags of the fraudulent publications claiming and receiving second class rates from time immemorial, making the United States partner to their frauds, and a subsidizer of the publishing concerns to an amount exceeding \$4,000,000 annually. The work in that direction is not yet completed but it has saved enough to increase the free rural delivery system.

In addition to the vast increase in the number of free rural delivery routes, the ultimate object of the postal department is one cent letter postage, a certainty when Third Assistant Postmaster General Madden is through with the balance of the gentry using the mails for their own advertising schemes, while masquerading under the guise of newspaper or magazine publications. The showing of the department is not only gratifying, but a matter of great wonder. For the first time in 20 years the deficit in the department has been in the neighborhood of only \$1,000,000, and if it had not been for the fraudulent publications, not yet fully run down, the close of the fiscal year would have shown a surplus.

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In reversing a damage suit against the Illinois Central Railroad Company for an assault upon a man and his wife while waiting for a train at Central City, the Appellate Court says: "At such stations the railroad is only required to have its waiting room open thirty minutes before train time and is not required to furnish an inn for persons to go into hours before the train is due to arrive."

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